

# REPORTS OF MISSION FIELDS.

Addresses Delivered at the Seventy-Fifth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Thursday, April 6, 1905, by Presidents Joseph E. Robinson, Nephi Pratt and Joseph A. McKae.

## Progress of Gospel Work in California, Northwestern States and Colorado Missions.

ELDER JOS. E. ROBINSON, (President of California Mission). For the few moments I stand before you my brethren and sisters, I desire you to reflect upon your prayers of faith, an interest in the testimony of Jesus. I rejoice in the testimonies of my brethren which have been borne this day. It recalls to my mind a conversation I once had with a gentleman, when he said, "All you brethren speak the same words, bear the same testimony, and teach doctrine and principle alike." I told him it was in fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good things, that publisheth peace; that布告平和; that布告good things of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."

"They watched shall lift up the voice; with thy voice together shall they say, see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." The Lord has established Zion. The watchmen lift up the voice together; they see eye to eye, and their testimony is one in relation to peace, to salvation, to the fact that we belong to the church of Jesus Christ. They said, "We do no part of the consequences, but we do not share in the benefits." We do not make many converts in that great State of pleasure and of wealth; but those who do come into the church are of the better classes, and their growths in the church and more conversions in the church are great. The saints are growing and developing in faith and in the knowledge of the gospel. They receive in the triumphs of truth. They sorrow at the ignorance of the world and those who shun the shaft of veneration and contumely against the Lord's anointed. They rejoice in the growth of many of the worthy sons and daughters of Zion to that mission. We have pleasure also that some who may have been froward and who have got beyond the influence of home love, have had their testimonies rekindled. They have had the opportunity of comparing the gospel Jesus Christ with all other teachers, and when he has been swayed with pride and joy because of the new and everlasting covenant which God has established with their fathers, to their soul and to their redemption. We have heard today a little concerning the beginning of this work. We have been told of its wondrous growth in numbers, and in power; that it is known among all nations; that the name of the prophet Joseph Smith is spoken throughout the earth for good. It is well to speak of his character. Those who have taken cognizance of the advancement made thought cannot but know in seven or eight years the little Haven of the gospel has influenced and modified the precepts and concepts of men in relation to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have come to view the fact that saints alone are sufficient to save their concept of God and His attributes and powers have been changed; the old bottomless pit hell has been repudiated; a belief in that horrible heresy, the damnation of the lost, has been repudiated; and those who are not baptized in the name of the Son, and the concept of a personal God has grown. They believe today more in progression, than taught, though imperfectly, in some of their ideas of evolution. They sense more the capability of man, his relationship to Deity, the powers which he possesses, and with which he will be able to develop until he may become like unto his Father in Heaven. Many understand that like begins like, and that within man is an embryonic Deity. That we have some such teachings as from the learned professors of the great schools in our mission. They have learned to be more merciful, and have come to see that the gospel of Christ reaches farther to save than they thought seventy-five years ago. They are now preaching the doctrine of a probation after death, a life beyond the veil, wherein mankind may have another opportunity to adjust them selves to the gospel plan. They are also teaching tithes and offerings. One man there is that has given us some belief in apostles, others teach us gathering. So, as I said in the beginning, the little heaven is leaving the whole jump, and although they will not admit it, their concept of God and His word has been most wonderfully modified in the minds of the people who have been taught upon the principles of "spiritualism," "reincarnation," and so forth. They declare that spirit was master, only finer and more subtle, and that atoms could be divided ad infinitum. Orson Pratt, getting his key from the prophet Joseph Smith, taught the same doctrine and wrote his "Abilities of Immortal Souls," in 1842. So that not only in religious matters, but in scientific as well, the revelations of the Lord have had their influence in the world. Seventy-five years ago physiology and hygiene were not understood and taught, as they are today. Men have arrived at a point where they have in the Word of Wisdom, and the States have made it incumbent upon the teachers in their various schools to teach the rising generation the health laws that are embodied in the Word of Wisdom. Not only that, but great corporations have also, through their partake of this spirit, and those induce in strong drink or use to excess find it difficult to get employment with them, and if they do get it, the work is generally unimportant.

I rejoice that the Saints of our mission sustain the church with their confidence and prayers. President Joseph E. Smith and his counselors, the members of the Twelve Apostles, would like to remind you, my brothers and sisters, of the words of Christ when he said, "Come ye to me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." They thought it right to beware of the Devil, and that he was to be avoided. He explained this matter to them, and they saw that He referred to their doctrines and teachings. Now, as our teachings have modified, the thought of the Devil, at least in religious matters, let me say, at the leaves of the gentiles does not modify God's change the testimonies he has had. He has set His hand to gather in the four corners of the earth, that the north has been made to give up, that the south has kept not back, and that the east and daughters of God have been gathered from the east, from the west, and from afar off, to be His pat of His ways, and to walk in His paths. When philanthropists arise and proclaim

against Mother Goose rhymes, such as the ones that deal with old Daddy Long Legs, being improper teachings for our children, we can see why say of papers and books that aim their shafts at the amount of the Lord?

Will we have such books and papers in our homes? Will we have the adversary, like a serpent, enter therein to poison the atmosphere? Can we expect that our children will learn things more healthfully, easily, from such sources than those which are convened in the Mother Goose rhymes and jingles? Beware of the leaves of the Sadducees and Pharisees! Keep your covenant before the Lord. Betray not the Holy Priesthood. Be humble and faithful, and await the day when the prophecy of Isaiah shall be fulfilled wherein he says:

"Arise, shiner for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy glory the glory."

God grant it. Amen.

ELDER NEPHI PRATT.

(President of Northwestern States Mission)

My brethren and sisters, I have listened this day to that which I came to conference to hear. My heart has rejoiced in the things that we have heard. I am glad that I am here. I have come from the northwest, where I have labored for almost three years, to meet with the general body of the church at their great conference, for which I rejoice in the mission over which I have been called to preside, notwithstanding the indifference of the people against most anything that bears the name of religion is so great that it is like the hide of a rhinoceros, scarce to penetrate, and it is all our Elders can do to move the people, having perhaps one gospel conversation, two or three days, and oftentimes that will be with people who have recently come from the east. In the year just past we baptized about seventy-five souls in that mission; about half of them were the children of people already in the church. The saints are growing and developing in faith and in the knowledge of the gospel. 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